

"O mankind, surely we have created you from male and female, and made you tribes and families that you may know one another."

(Quran 49:13)

PROGRESSIVE ISLAM

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COLONIALISM

In the last issue we dealt with the traits of colonialism and their rationalization put forward by the colonial powers. The traits were the following: the colour line, the political control of the colony by the colonizing power, the economic dependence of the colony on the colonizing country, the appallingly low standard of social service, and the lack of contact between the ruling power and the natives of the colony. These traits were respectively rationalized by the following ideas: the superiority of the white race, the incapability of the colony for self-rule, the incapability of the natives to exploit economically the country, the financial insufficiency of the government, and the culturally and intellectually lower position of the natives. In this issue we are presenting the refutation to all these rationalized ideas.

THE REFUTATION OF THE ABOVE RATIONALIZATION: As to the superiority of the white race the whole doctrine crumbled to pieces at the touch of scientific analysis. To begin with, as Mr. J. C. van Leur observes,¹ if the white race is superior, then it must be so in all periods of history unless its superiority is not caused by its hereditary racial qualities. We know for certain that the white race has never been superior in all periods of its historical existence. Thus the racial factor could not be the cause of the superiority, for otherwise it ought to be superior all the time. According to their own standard of civilization, the colonial powers of the West, were civilized barely three thousand years ago, if we include the inhuman societies of ancient Greece and Rome as links in the historical chain of Western civilization. Others like G. H. Sabine preferred with much truth, to consider the beginning of Western civilization in the Hellenistic age of Alexander the Great in the 3rd century before Christ.² Still others preferred to regard the origin of Western civilization in the birth of Christianity and its expansion in Europe. But nevertheless all agreed, including the apologists of colonialism that the white race is not civilized from the very moment of its entry in the scale of evolution.

Furthermore the Orientals had developed civilizations of their own when the races of Europe were still steeped in ignorance and barbarism. If

their present inferiority is caused by racial qualities then in the past also they ought to be inferior. But this was not the case. Note the Hindu, the Buddhist and the Islamic civilizations. These civilizations which were then much more superior to that of Europe were created by Orientals. Thus the racial explanation of the superiority of one civilization above another leaving aside the relative meaning of the word

ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to uncontrollable circumstances the editor regrets to announce that the publication of Progressive Islam shall be suspended until approximately the beginning of next year. The editor wishes to apologize for any inconvenience caused to the readers as a result of this decision. He further desires to express his most sincere gratitude to those who had helped him or had shown sympathy for Progressive Islam. Those who have paid for the suspended issues could get their subscription refunded. Complete sets of published issues are available for those who need them.

superior is an extremely absurd and unfounded statement of causality.

A more responsible and well-founded explanation of the sense of superiority is given by those who adopt the psychological and sociological manner of approach. Professor W. F. Wertheim, amongst others, explained how the status of a group is related to the sense of racial superiority.³ A group which happened to be in a superior status in a given society, always explained its position along racial lines if the others who were inferior in status did not belong to the same race. Thus for instance the British in India and Burma before (and now in Malaya) tended to feel racially superior because of their having a superior status while those natives whose status was not superior were looked upon as racially inferior. Thus it is actually the dominant status of a group that caused its feeling of racial superiority. The facts in support of this theory are cited in abundance by the various authors.

For the sake of brevity I shall not present more proofs for the above theory. The facts and proofs are so abundant and obvious that it would not require further efforts on my part.

The rationalization regarding the state of economic dependence is as unfounded as that concerning the colour line. Returning to Raymond Kennedy, he pointed out that the natives of the colonised countries hardly had the chance of learning the skill due to financial disability. Apart from this, as we learned from daily life, for an enterprise to be really successful it has not only to be capable of running the process of production but also to gain control of the means of distribution. Since the means of distribution, as well as capital and skill, were controlled by the colonial power there could scarcely be anything left for the native entrepreneurs or industrialists to build upon except the remaining possibilities allowed and restricted by the colonial power within the framework of its policy. We learned from history that for a class to become creative and enterprising it has to extricate itself from the shackles of economic dependence. This was the case with the European bourgeoisie in the eve of capitalism. The bourgeois class which later became the backbone of capitalism liberated itself from its economic dependence on the feudal lords. To put it briefly the bourgeois was originally a serf who managed to extricate himself from the clutch of his feudal lord. This ought to be the case also with the natives of colonised areas.

As to skill in production, that is a highly relative factor. What do we mean by skill? From the point of view of the colonial power the natives were incapable of building plants and running them. They were not capable of setting up oil refineries, etc. etc. But one can say from the point of view of the natives the European

rulers were an incapable group of men. They were not capable of planting rice or building pagodas. Whether tapping oil and building plants were more important than planting rice and making pagodas is a controversial issue that could be put aside. But the fact remains that judged from the point of view of human welfare and happiness the concept of skill is a highly relative thing.

The absurdity of rationalising the economic dependence of a colonised country on the ruling power as due to the natives' inability to exploit the land was further proved by one of the vanguards of colonialism itself. England did not tolerate Germany's invasion of Poland which caused the formal outbreak of the war in 1939. The Germans were then certainly more capable of exploiting the country than the Poles themselves due to their superiority in skill and technology. Like the other rationalizations one can safely say that this is a bad one.

We now come with the rationalization of the low social service especially education. This time it was financial insufficiency of the government. In reality it was lack of interest from the side of the government. Kennedy noted that the Netherlands Indian Government spent about 1/10 only of the budget on education. The other agencies of welfare seemed also to be geared to the demand of economic profits. Thus Furnivall noted how research in rice experiments in Malaya was later abandoned in favor of rubber experiments despite the fact that the need for improvement in rice cultivation was great and vital. More attention was of course put into it again when the situation became disturbing for the government in Malaya. So were there numerous examples concerning the neglect of social service in colonial dependency.

As to the fact natives were unclean, ignorant and uninteresting, apart from its relative implication, it was partly the result of the colonial policy. Apart from the fact that this state of affair did not prevail in all sections of the native population and certainly not in all periods of their history, there was sufficient reasons for the ruling power to intensify their social intercourse with the natives, even if it was merely for the sake of creating amicable relations between the two groups. From the economic or political, as well as the ethical point of view, friendly relations between the two groups was certainly an objective requirement judged from the standpoint of a sound colonial rule.

1) B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*.

2) G. H. Sabine, *History of political theory*.

3) W. F. Wertheim, *Het rasfenprobleem*.

MODES OF TRANSMISSION OF POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY IN THE ISLAMIC STATE

by

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It is quite clear how utterly different were the Beduin Arabs from other nations, and how energetically they strove to assert, even in the earliest times, the right of the people to choose and elect their ruler or tribal chief. They had been accustomed to acknowledge no other authority than that of the ephemeral tribal chief whom they elected and deposed when occasion demanded. Foreign to the Arabs was the idea of a hereditary Kingship as rarely indeed did the headship of an Arab tribe remain longer than four generations in one single family. Nobility of birth, seniority in age and other personal distinctions were the qualifications for rulership in a tribe. There was no definite tenure of the office of the Chief who was allowed to hold authority during his good behaviour.

It is highly significant that the Quran is silent and even the Holy Prophet did not leave any definite instructions nor did he lay down any particular procedure for the appointment of his successor. To some this may appear rather disappointing but there is every reason to suppose that this omission was deliberate and quite in consonance with the elastic and universal character of Islam. As Islam is meant for all times and all climes, it could not afford to bind its followers to a hard and rigid procedure in this matter. The Prophet knowing very well that the mode of succession would differ from time to time and from people to people, deliberately abstained from laying down any particular rules of procedure in this behalf, thus leaving this question to be decided by the people themselves. The early Caliphs, however, in keeping with their own national traditions, and in accordance with the spirit of Islam adopted the following three modes of succession which can serve as precedents to Muslims who could follow any one of them suiting their own circumstances and environments.

ELECTION OF THE FIRST CALIPH

As soon as the Ansar of Madina heard about the death of the Holy Prophet, they assembled to-

gether in order to elect the Caliph from among themselves. When this news reached the prominent Companions of the Prophet, Abu Bakr, Umar and Abu Ubaida, scenting the danger from such an election, hastened to the spot. Abu Bakr argued the point with the Ansar that if they elected the Caliph from among themselves, no recognition would be given to such an election by all the tribes of Arabia and particularly by the Quraish who occupied the most important and prominent position in Arabia. Thereupon the Ansar demanded that there should be two chiefs, one from among themselves and the other from among the Quraish. Abu Bakr rejected this demand emphatically asserting the fundamental principle of Sovereignty that there could not be two Caliphs in one State; and when he recalled the famous traditions of the Prophet 'Al-Imam min al Quraish,' (Imam to be chosen from the Quraish) the Ansar were convinced of the futility of their claims to the Caliphate and agreed with Abu Bakr's argument. In the meanwhile, Umar reminded the people that Abu Bakr was the most revered, the senior most among the Chief Companions of the Prophet and had the honour of leading the congregational prayers of the Muslims during the illness of the Prophet, and took oath of allegiance to him as the first Caliph in Islam. And when Abu Ubaida followed suit, the whole assembly present there took the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr. On the following day, the whole public took the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr as the first Caliph.

APPOINTMENT OF THE SECOND CALIPH

During his last illness, Abu Bakr thought of nominating his successor and after due consideration he put the name of Umar before the prominent Companions of the Holy Prophet and when there was unanimity regarding his proposal, he got a will made out nominating Umar as his successor. There after, he convened a general assembly of the people to announce his will. When Abu Bakr announced the name of Umar as his successor, it was accepted with great zeal

and acclamation by the public assembled there; and all the people took the oath of allegiance for him without any signs of disapproval.

SELECTION OF THE THIRD CALIPH

When the Caliph Umar was fatally wounded by a Christian and it was felt that there was no hope of his survival, he was approached by the prominent Companions of the Prophet to settle the question of succession. In the first instance he was not agreeable to nominate anybody and expressed his wish to have nominated either Abu Ubaida or Salim the liberated slave of Abu Huzaifa if they were alive. When asked to nominate his own son Abdullah ibn Umar, he said that he had not even conceived the name of his own son for the office. When further pressed to settle this question, he nominated a Council of the following six most important companions of the Prophet — Ali, Usman, Talha, Zubair, Said ibn Waqqas, Abdur Rahman ibn Awf — and instructed them to select the Caliph from among themselves within the next three days. He also associated the name of his own son Abdullah ibn Umar but only in a consultative capacity. He was not allowed to contest the election to the Caliphate but was only authorised to cast his vote in case there was equal division of votes. Since Talha was away from Madina, he gave further instructions that in case of equal division of votes, the person for whom Abdur Rahman ibn Awf had cast his vote may be elected. He was very emphatic on the point that the selection of the Caliph must take place within three days and that the decision of the majority must be enforced even at the point of the sword. In accordance with these instructions, the Council started functioning immediately after his funeral ceremony was over. In order to facilitate the selection, Abdur Rahman ibn Awf suggested that some of the members of the Council should withdraw their candidature. Thereupon three of them, namely Said ibn Waqqas, Zubair and Talha withdrew their candidature from the contest, thus leaving the remaining three, namely, Ali, Usman and Abdur Rahman ibn Awf in the field. Next Abdur Rahman ibn Awf suggested that any one of them who would now withdraw his candidature would be empowered to make the choice of the Caliph. On hearing this proposal, both Usman and Ali kept quiet and Abdur Rahman ibn Awf thereupon withdrew his candidature and thus undertook upon himself to make the selection of the third Caliph. He asked Ali whether he would follow the Quran, the traditions of the Prophet and the precedents of the first two Caliphs in case he was selected for the Caliphate. The latter replied that he would try his best but he would also apply his own judgement.

When the same question was put to Usman, the

latter replied in the affirmative without any reservation. However, Abdur Rahman ibn Awf in order to satisfy himself, spent the remaining time in sounding the opinion of the people; and when he realized that the majority was in favour of Usman, he took the path of allegiance to the latter. The decision of Abdur Rahman ibn Awf was accepted by the people unanimously including Ali himself and the oath of allegiance was given to him by all the people throughout the Islamic State.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

From the above-mentioned modes of succession adopted during the early Caliphate, the following fundamental principles may be deduced so far as the transmission of political Sovereignty in the Islamic State is concerned. Firstly, there is the indivisible character of Sovereignty. When the Ansar realised that it was futile on their part to lay any possible claims to the office of the Caliphate, they made demand that there should be two Amirs, one from among themselves and another from among the tribes of Quraish. Abu Bakr, who was the leader and the representative of the Quraish, emphatically refused to concede this demand saying that there could not be two Amirs among the Muslims.

MODE OF ELECTION

The second point that emerged from the above mentioned modes of succession is the appointment of the Head of the Islamic State. The principle of hereditary succession was scrupulously avoided by Abu Bakr by not nominating his own son or brother but by nominating the best candidate available at that time; and particularly by Umar who had excluded his own equally capable son, Adullah ibn Umar from contesting the election while conceding him the right to vote in case of equal division of the votes of the Shura. Thirdly only prominent companions could stand for election for the exalted office of the Caliphate, and the rest of the people of Madina could elect. The remaining people were to ratify the election subsequently by taking oath of allegiance to the elected Caliph either at his own hands in Madina or at the hands of his representatives in the Provinces. This shows that Islam enjoins higher qualifications for the category of people from among whom the candidates for the exalted office could be drawn and lesser qualifications are expected from those who are given the right to vote. Even those who could not be directly connected with the election had to be associated with it by being asked to take the oath of allegiance. It is on this score that al-Mawardi, the celebrated Muslim Jurist, divides the whole Muslim nation into two classes; the first embracing all those who put forward a claim to sovereignty and the other who possess the right of electing the Imam. He has suggested manifold qualifi-

cations for those who could contest for the office of the Caliphate, viz., Spotless integrity, possesses juridico-theological knowledge, free from defects of hearing, sight and speech, free from physical infirmities, have an insight for governing the people and conducting the affairs of the State, possesses the courage and boldness in defending the Muslim State and in fighting the enemies, descent from the family of Quraish. Among the conditions Mawardi omits two which have been added by later jurists for instance by Qazi Baidhawi in his *Tawil-ul-Anwar* and by Ghazzali in his *Ihya* (Vol. I P. 147) namely full manhood or maturity and belonging to the male sex. All these qualifications were necessary in order to run an Ideological Islamic State. The last of Mawardi's qualifications, viz., descent from the tribe of Quraish seems to be in contradiction with the fundamental principle of equality in Islam. But those who are acquainted with the political conditions prevailing in the Arabia of those days will agree that the Quraish was the only tribe to whom obedience and allegiance could be conceded by all other tribes in Arabia on account of their dynastic influence, political position and their very large number at the advent of Islam. Moreover, since the founder of Islam and its ideology also belonged to them, there was no question of electing the Prophet's successor from any other tribe. Who could vie with the personalities like Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Ali in theological knowledge, integrity of character, self sacrifice and the will to run that ideological state? However, this tradition was upheld by the Prophet upheld at all if in order to suit the exigencies of the then Arabs. This tradition is believed to have been quoted by Abu Bakr at a time when the Ansar wanted to elect the Imam from amongst themselves. If the Ansar had succeeded in doing so, the Islamic State should have fallen to pieces immediately. Not to say of any recognition given to them by the Quraish, the rival party among the Ansar themselves would have opposed it. It shows clearly that the Caliph must have been elected from among the tribe of Quraish from the closest Companions of the Prophet as the latter along with their leader had suffered and were willing to suffer to the utmost for the maintenance of that ideological State. If any proof is needed that this tradition was only meant as a temporary measure and not for the future, it can be provided by the important saying of Hazrat Umar. When the latter was approached by the Companions of the Prophet to nominate someone for the Caliphate, he expressed himself thus: 'Whom should I nominate? There is none worthy of it. If Abou Ubaida ibn al Jarrah or Salim, the liberated slave of Huzaifa were alive I would have nominated either of them. This clearly shows that the

descent from the tribe of Quraish was not an essential condition for the candidature of the Caliphate. Even a slave could be nominated or chosen if he were to prove more capable and possessed of more virtues than many a candidate from the tribe of Quraish. Moreover, the well known historical sermon by the Prophet on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage when he preached that neither the Arabs have any preference over the Ajam nor the latter over the former, but that their character and virtue are those that count, throws ample light on this matter. The only criterion in matters of all appointments, including that of the Caliph, should have been in accordance with the Prophet's sermon, viz., the capability and character of the candidate concerned. Although in the above-mentioned qualifications the non-muslims have not been expressly debarred from putting their claims for election as Caliph, yet in accordance with the well-known verse of the Quran, it is too obvious that from among the qualified Muslims alone the Head of the State could be chosen. Apparently it might appear as an injustice to non-Muslims; but on closer scrutiny it becomes unavoidable. As the Islamic State is based on the Islamic ideology only those believers in that Ideology who were well versed in it and were prepared to undergo all kinds of suffering and privations in order to maintain it, could possibly be entrusted with its working. Even in the modern world, we have got a similar and parallel example of another ideological State, viz., the Communistic State where none could be entrusted with the working of the State who did not subscribe to the fundamental principles of that ideology.¹

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE VOTERS

The other group of the population, which is required to vote for the candidates for the Caliphate, is also required to possess certain qualifications; and Mawardi lays down three qualifications for them, viz., literacy, intelligence and spotless character.² This is necessitated by the fact that Islam enjoins upon the people to be quite free and intelligent enough to cast their votes for the right type of person. If a country is so advanced as to develop all these qualifications among all the adults, then and then alone can universal adult enfranchisement be conceded. But if on the other hand, a certain country has not developed literacy to such an extent, then even the voters may be divided into two categories; namely those who would actually vote and secondly those who would simply ratify the election made by the literate voters. Therefore it may be concluded that the widening of enfranchisement depends upon the expansion of education in a country, and providing conditions that might facilitate free election.

After the election of the Caliph, every adult Muslim citizen was required to take the oath of allegiance to the Caliph. This was necessitated by two factors; firstly, all of them had not voted at the time of election, and secondly, all the citizens must be bound by an oath of allegiance so that they should always obey the orders of the Caliph and cooperate with him in matters of state. Once the oath for allegiance had been taken by the believers, it could not be broken unless, of course, the Caliph violated the laws flagrantly. This oath of allegiance was purely a contractual affair between the Caliph and the citizens. The people had surrendered all their rights in the person of the Caliph so that the latter should regulate the affairs of the State in accordance with the Divine laws; and if he acted contrary to them, the contract was no longer in existence and the citizens were exonerated from their oath of allegiance. Since the real electors were the prominent companions of the Prophet, greater importance was attached to the oath of allegiance of such persons. No other state has granted so much importance to an individual as the Islamic State. Even in modern times, no oath of allegiance is taken by every individual to the Head of the State. Only Ministers of State are administered the oath of allegiance, whereas in the Islamic State, every individual is required to take the oath of allegiance to the Caliph.³

Remarkable indeed is the conception of the relation between the Nation and the Sovereign. Mawardi regards it as a bilateral contract. If the elected Caliph refused the nomination he could not be made to accept it. A necessary consequence of this view was that the acceptance of election imposed certain duties. Those duties of the Muslim Sovereign, according to Mawardi were: To uphold the fundamentele principles of the Muslim religion; to decide law suits and to settle other disputes; to defend the territories of the Islamic States; to administer the penal law; to guard the frontier by maintaining garrison and making preparations for war; to fight those who refused to accept Islam or to submit upon terms laid down for non-Muslims⁴; to pay the annuity from the State Treasury; to levy taxes and imposts according to the law; to appoint trustworthy men and councillors for the administration of different districts and for fiscal purposes; to personally inspect and control the administration. If the Caliph discharged and fulfilled these duties, the people, as against these, had two duties to discharge on their part — to render him obedience; to render him assistance.

DEPOSITION OF THE CALIPH

The association of every adult Muslim in the

election of a Caliph through Bai'a, gave then the correspondending right of demanding the deposition of the Caliph in case he acted contrary to the injunctions of the Sharia or he became incapacitated to carry on the administration of the State. Here again the initiative, as in the case of the election came from the first category of the people and the rest of the population was required to ratify the deposition. Once it was done, the deposition was final and the deposed Caliph was immediately dethroned, as there was no fixed tenure of the Caliphate. The latter was allowed to administer affairs through good behaviour.

For depositing a sovereign, the people generally met in the Chief Mosque. Some man of position addressed the assembly, and charges were imputed and made against the ruling caliph, and his deposition was declared in the interest of Islam. The speaker concluded his speech by taking his ring from his finger, or throwing it away and adding 'I cast away so and so as I do this ring or this shoe'. With this the act of deposition was completed.

The Arab Jurists recognised along with election, another mode of transmission of sovereignty, viz., the nomination of the reigning Caliph. We need scarcely emphasise the apparent opposition between these two methods of transmission of sovereignty, viz., the elective sovereignty and transmission of sovereignty by royal disposition. Elective franchise was due to the old Arabian custom of election to the tribal chieftainship by the different tribes. The transmission of sovereignty by testamentary disposition, on the other hand, owed its origin to the nomination of Umar made by the first Caliph Abu Bakr. But it should not be forgotten that Abu Bakr did not nominate his own son or brother but nominated the best qualified person for the office in order to avoid unnecessary election and that too after the unanimous decision of the chief Companions of the Prophet. His nomination also recieved the unanimous acceptance at the hands of the general public without even a dissentient voice. It was most unfortunate for Muslim Policy that this loophole was taken advantage of for the first time by Muavia who nominated his own son to the Caliphate. This procedure was maintained subsequently by all the succeeding dynasties among Muslims, and in the absence of any line of demarcation between the religious and the temporal functions of the Caliphate the jurist had to recognise the nomination system which was against their national traditions and the spirit of the Islamic State as a fait accompli.

But even when the reigning Caliph had appointed a successor the arrangements had invariably to be confirmed by general election and homage; and no Caliph appointing his son or kinsman as

his successor omitted to obtain the general homage by which popular approval was secured and supreme consecration obtained.

The old Arabian idea of seniority was in constant conflict with the natural zeal of the father to hand down the sovereignty to the son and, therefore, we find that the succession was not based purely on hereditary basis. There are instances in which the son or even the brother have been ignored and some one else more capable than either the son or the brother has been nominated by the previous Caliph. The case of the nomination of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz by the Caliph Sulaiman during the Umayyad Caliphate and that of Imam Ali al Riza by the Caliph Mamun may be cited as examples (though rare). An election, once effected, was regarded as so holy and binding that its operative force only ceased by the Caliph himself and thus we find a very common saying: "Election lies heavy on my neck". Only the most imminent danger of life could induce the Caliph to renounce his election, and even this had to be done in public. The Caliph Hadi, in defiance of public sentiments, set aside the succession of Harun al Rashid and caused homage to be done to his son Jafar, but when Hadi died, the majority declared in favour of Harun al-Rashid. One of the officers of the latter hastened straightway to Jafar and threatened to kill him instantly if he did not renounce his election. Jafar consented, and stepping out on the balcony of the palace, he called out: "O inhabitants of the town! I release him on whose neck lies heavy my election. The throne belongs to my uncle Harun, and I have no right or title to it. O People! You are aware that no man is to be obeyed when he commands an act that is sinful. This is my address to you and I pray God for forgiveness for myself and for you."

The deposition of Walid II and the election of Yazid III by the people clearly demonstrate the purely democratic character of election. The Caliph could be simply deposed if he failed to fulfil his promise or to carry out his trust. The only and exclusive source of sovereignty and power was election by the assembled community of Muslims.

Often, indeed, did the institution of election sink into a mere formality; but instances are not wanting which prove how deep-rooted in the minds of the Arabian people was the idea that election was an essential preliminary to the legal assumption of political Sovereignty.

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- 1) It must be remembered that Communism believes in a one party dictatorship which is not agreeable to Islam. The head of a democratic state must also be a democrat. This comparison is more appropriate. E.D.
 - 2) These conditions are highly incompatible in view of modern conditions. To begin with the concept 'spotless character' shall create indissoluble difficulty in its definition and application to practice. Furthermore literacy is no index to progress but only a result of it. An illiterate can be more sound than a literate one. The Prophet is a shining example. E.D.
 - 3) This is also a highly impractical thing that can become a burden to a modern state whenever there is an election. Imagine Indonesia, composed of more than 3,000 islands not easily communicable, with its more than 60 million Muslim inhabitants, were to become an Islamic State. Either the Head of the State has to contact the islands and the millions of inhabitants to accept their oath of allegiance or the other way round, every Muslim has to contact him. The problem is enormous. E.D.
 - 4) We believe this to be a flagrant contradiction with both the literal and implied teaching of Islam. An Islamic State which harbours the idea to carry this out in practice now, has no right to exist. It certainly can cause a civil war between Muslims if such an intolerant an un-Islamic policy is to be practised by some Islamic rulers. E.D.

MUSLIM WORLD AT THE CROSS-ROADS

by

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The world is today clearly and sharply divided into hostile camps. There are even clouds of war over the world's horizon. The world seems to be faced with a choice between capitalism and communism because they are today the only two systems and powers conscious of their mutual hostility and consciously preparing to strike at each other. But there is a third group also. There are individuals and nations who are opposed to imperialism and capitalism; yet they do not look upon Soviet Communism as the only remedy

of all human ills. They do not regard Communism as the only solution of imperialism, capitalism, social injustices, racial discrimination, and poverty. But the present world crisis and struggle is not purely ideological and idealistic. There are historical forces and factors involved in the present-day conflict. The situation today between the West and the East is not substantially different from the one described in 1925 by a European publicist, Felix Valyi, in these words: "the dramatic conflict between the East and the

West, which from time immemorial has been presented on the screen of history, is assuming a new aspect and becoming more and more bitter from day to day... the West finds herself faced by a new and disquieting form of the eternal Eastern Question. The problem which was first raised by the material greed of Europe, and was afterwards camouflaged into a religious question by the rhetoric of the Churches, has, since the Great War, developed into a problem of moral and spiritual magnitude that of balancing the historic forces which sway humanity.... The problem of the future relations of Western Europe with the Moslem world and with the continent of Asia in general remains the centre of world politics and constitutes their most fateful and fundamental question.... the same fundamental problem is everywhere raised, the same identical question as to whether Europe and Asia, East and West, will come to an amicable understanding regarding the reconstruction of a habitable world.... The same economic and psychological considerations that gave rise to the American War of Independence in 1776 are now convulsing the continent of Asia.... All the grandiose plans for world-wide reconstruction are doomed to failure unless the West is prepared to find a suitable place for the Eastern nations". No enduring understanding and co-operation between the powers of the West and the countries of Asia and Africa can be possible unless the West is willing to meet these nations on an equal and honourable footing.

For centuries the countries of Asia and Africa have been the hunting-ground for Western adventure and enterprise; and they have tasted the 'blessings' of imperialist European 'civilised' government. Although some Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Indonesia) have been 'granted' freedom, the white imperialist powers have not shed their racial-superiority complex and still want to be the power behind the curtain in the direction of Asian and African affairs. The European powers, chief among them Britain and France, are not even now prepared to liquidate their colonial empires in Asia and Africa; even if they are forced to leave by one door, they want to re-enter by another door, preferably the back-door. They are still clinging to their colonial possessions and military bases against the expressed will of the people concerned. French policies in North Africa, British policy in Malaya and Kenya, and the Dutch policy in regard to Indonesian claim to Irian are all interrelated. Even if the European colonial powers have been forced by the force of circumstances to concede political freedom to some of their colonial possessions, they are not going to loosen their economic hold and sacrifice their economic and commercial interests.

Capitalist countries of the West will never like

to see Asia and Africa completely industrialised; today Asia provides all the important raw materials for the Western industrial machinery. The real cause of the second world war was economic and commercial rivalry between the capitalist countries themselves'). The European powers had divided Asia and Africa between themselves. Germany was without important colonies and foreign markets. Japan was an expanding industrial country in Asia and was looking for markets, and was formulating a policy of 'co-prosperity' of Asian countries. Germany, conscious of belonging to the 'superior' white race, could not lag behind other white powers in sharing Asian and African spoils. Chinese and Indian markets in Asia were monopolised by the United States and England. China's next-door neighbor Japan had made great industrial progress so much so that it became a rival of American and British commerce. The ultimate result of all these facts was war. Today the same story is being repeated. All the political chicanery and diplomatic strategy of the Western powers in the Middle East is tied to oil wells").

The basic and propelling impulse that has dominated and directed Western political and economic life has been the quest of things material. Wealth, territory, power, these were the things that were the objects of Western enterprise and expansion over the earth'). The European nations, armed with the destructive forces of modern science, went out to conquer, to dominate, to subjugate, and exploit the whole of the non-European world. The main quest and the primary motive of the restless Western spirit has been inordinate gain. Marlowe's Tamberlaine, Faustus, and Barabas are only the symbols of this Western quest for power, wealth and pleasure even if it means bartering one's soul to the Devil. In order to make the profits secure, the European powers vindicated their strong political control by methods of frightfulness and barbarism, in order that the native populations may remain cowed and docile. In Kenya, for one European killed two hundred Africans have been killed. No moral principle and plea can be advanced to justify such barbarities. In some Asian countries national liberation movements are conveniently given a Communist label, giving the dog a bad name to hang him; although it may be a fact that in some countries Communists have taken the lead and initiative in national awakening and in guiding the national freedom movements. It is a dangerous delusion to suppose that the evils of economic imperialism are a thing of the past; all that has happened is that the methods of exploitation have become more expertly manipulated.

In the midst of all the hullabaloo about the real or supposed Red menace, the great powers of the West have been careful not to lose sight

of their economic interests and to maintain their hold over the important raw materials produced in Asia, such as oil and rubber. By bringing pressure on Asian countries not to export these important items to Communist countries, good care has been taken to keep their prices down, and by limiting their market, to purchase them at prices dictated by themselves. The whole Western approach rests on fraud, falsehood, and force. The aim of every war was declared to be 'to make the world safe for democracy', to 'vindicate the principle of selfdetermination', to 'protect small nations against the aggressions of the strong', and behind all these seemingly pious and noble declarations there have been other more practical considerations. There has been no real change of heart and outlook on the part of Western nations in their approach and attitude towards the peoples of the East⁴).

The political Alliances of the West have always been based not on any real and lasting community of ideas and ideals but on temporary political expediencies. The West has not ceased to think of Asia and Africa in terms of tutelage or guardianship. The present-day wooing of the Muslim world by the leaders of the Western alliance is based more on political expediency and diplomacy than on real and genuine respect and love for Islam and its followers. For the Church-going and 'believing' Western man and woman the Prophet of Islam still remains a 'false' prophet. The attitude of the Christian West towards Islam has not undergone any fundamental change. To quote Felix Valyi again: 'Truth to tell, European politics has never been able to shake itself free from theological bias, particularly in regard to Islam, and organized Christianity had always continued to prosecute the religious policy of preceding centuries, a policy infected with the prejudices which Byzantine chroniclers bequeathed to Western thought. These chroniclers were the great initiators of the anti-Muslim movement, and perverted European judgment regarding Oriental matters by such trumped-up assertions as defeated nations usually make in order to wreck their vengeance upon their conquerors, and to comfort themselves in their humiliation.... Even at the present day, European politics still labour under this theological bias in regard to the peoples of Islam'. Cobden, the head of the Manchester School, combated the growing anti-Russian sentiments of English public opinion, and openly joined those who, in the name of Christianity, recommended the dismemberment of Turkey in favour of Russia. The Eastern policy of all British Liberal cabinets in the nineteenth century pursued one and the same line, from Palmerston to Gladstone, up to Grey and Asquith. And it was Palmerstone who said: 'We do not have eternal principles; we have only eternal interests'. Wes-

tern diplomacy has never understood that the essence of the Eastern problem lies in producing a fundamental change in the relations between the West and Asia, by allowing Asian and African peoples to solve the vital questions of their existence unmolested by external intrigues and pressure.

Western political 'ethics' and tradition is brutally and inhumanly practical and realistic, as it shall be, deriving as it does from Machiavelli. In this tradition there is no room for sincerity, truth, justice and humanity. A staggering example of this Machiavellian political tradition was the recent confession of Mr. Winston Churchill of his intention during the second world war to give back arms to the Nazi army and turn round against Russia who was at that very time Britain's ally against Nazi Germany.⁵ These brutal realities of Western political conduct are not generally known to or realised by the political leaders in most Muslim countries.

On the other hand, Soviet Union and Communism stand for a totally different system and world-view. Communism is not merely an economic system, it is a philosophy and view of life which wants to build up a new world order based on new values. Even if it be granted that Marxist Communism believes in values of truth and justice, it is also a fact that these values have a meaning according to Communism which is different from what it is in the mind of the non-Communist world. The concept of eternal verities and Values had no place in Communist philosophy. To the Communist all means are good so long as they help him in achieving his ends. Materialistic interpretation of the world and human history is the bed-rock of Communism. A purely materialist view of things cannot give to men virtues of self-negation and self-denial. But Marxism is itself a Western heresy; it is the logical development of the intellectual forces and political and economic factors involved in the history of Europe since the Renaissance.

Capitalism, on the other hand, is concerned only with the profit and gain of the few and actively contributes to the misery of the many. It is based on outdated and outmoded laissez-faire, on unsocial individualism. It has no concern with the organized and planned welfare of all. The fruit of the labour of the many is shared by the few only. Self-worship and money-worship are the only values of capitalism. Capitalism must make and earn profit even if the people should starve. The prices must be kept high even if there is a famine in any part of the world. Islam alone combines an active concern for the welfare of all with respect for individuality and individual liberty.

In view of all these facts the choice before the Muslim world is not an easy one. The pro-

blem is to find the middle way between Capitalism and Communism, and to remain above the battle, putting their own house in order. For three centuries Asian countries have suffered under Western imperialism, and have not had time and resources to develop and prosper. These countries need peace more than war. All the effort and resources of Asian countries should be directed to the building up of a democratic and equitable social order, a classless society where all men should have equal opportunities for a dignified and happy life. There appears no good reason why the countries of Asia should take the chestnuts out of the fire for others. The Muslim today has the golden opportunity of presenting to the world a third solution of the world's political, economic, and moral problems. The backwardsness and poverty of the people of the East, particularly the Muslim East, should not allow us to spend our resources and energy in a war with which we have no sympathy. There is much in the Muslim countries which has got to be set right. It is an irony of history that kingship, which Islam had come to end, is still alive in Muslim countries. We still see crowns in Muslim countries. The masses in these countries are without the bare necessities of life; they are without food, shelter, clothing, and education, but the Pashas and Sheikhs are giving reality to the dreams of Arabian Nights. In these countries, money and family are the determining factors in the national leadership. On one side there are mansions and palaces, and on the other there is only the roof of the heavens over the heads of the many. All claims about Islam being the best system of life will remain empty and tall talk unless we can prove it through action and practical example. There never was a more perfect democratic order than the one established under the first four Caliphs.

Western democracy is in practice the rule of the irresponsible and arbitrary will of the majority. There is no moral check on that will⁶). According to the teaching of the West's political teacher and master, Machiavelli, the state is free from and above all moral considerations⁷). According to the Machiavellian Western tradition, politics and ethics have been separated. This Western divorce of politics and ethics has been at the back of all the political crimes and injustices committed by the Western nations. Such an un-moral view of political theory and practice has resulted in the annihilation of moral values and denial of human rights. Unless the majority learns to regard its own will not as absolute but as subordinate to the higher will of God, to the demands of universal morality, there can be no peace in the world.

The most important duty of the Muslim countries today is to establish a genuinely democratic order and society fully providing for the mater-

ial and moral, intellectual and cultural needs of their peoples, an order based on respect for man as man. No man should be at the mercy of another man; there should be no poverty and misery; no man should be so rich as to purchase another, nor so poor as to sell himself to another. Every citizen must have food, clothing, shelter, education and culture. Every man and woman should have the freedom from fear, and freedom from degradation. While preserving one's individuality, every man should have the consciousness of the general social good; in fact, every individual should know that his individual well-being and happiness is closely bound up with that of others. *In their relations with other peoples of the world, the Muslim countries should base these relations on the recognition of a common God, a common humanity, and a common human decency.*

1. The economic factor was rather the object of dispute rather than the cause itself. That the economic factor was exploited by the leaders of the different Western powers does not warrant the conclusion that the cause of the previous world wars was in itself economic. Hostility between the different nations already existed before they exploited the economic factor. Lenin, however, being a Communist, propagated the view that war was caused by the wrangling around economic interests. This was a one sided view of the forces that shaped human history. Ed.
2. Security could also be one of the numerous motives of Western politics, apart from oil wells and commerce. Ed.
3. Historians of colonialism had pointed out the three stages of Western expansion in Asia. The earliest motive being a religious one. The desire for gain came into the scene only later following the change of events in Europe itself. Consult *Colonial policy and practice* by J. S. Furnivall. Ed.
4. When speaking of nations it would perhaps be advisable to differentiate between the various groups and classes pertaining to them. There had been of recent years great interest for the East amongst some groups and classes of Western society. In many respects the interest was sincere and genuine. In fact the help rendered by the West towards some of the peoples of the East in the form of funds for relief areas, etc., etc., had not been done under pressure or material motives. It is true that many of this kind of help are sometimes done without the intermediary of the Western governments concerned. But this can not be denied as a fact that there are elements in Western society who act not for selfish motives. Ed.

5. I do not think that this is a correct interpretation of Churchill's attitude. Churchill's intention was known to both Roosevelt and Stalin. Every political calculation involving a preference for a certain line of action need not be Machiavellian in nature. Ed.
6. We differ with the author in this. There is certainly a moral check in many of the constitutions of the Western countries. So is it in

their political parties. The existence of a group that does not believe in moral scruples does not invalidate the fact there are other groups who believe in absolute values. The American constitution is an example of the expression of absolute values, i.e. the belief in God. So are the numerous other constitutions in the states of the Western democracies. Ed.

TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN PROGRESS

by

Hussein Alatas

Technology and human progress

Technology arose out of the interaction between man and his environment. This interaction resulted from the fact that human beings are governed by certain needs of life such as food, shelter, clothing, sex, and other secondary needs. In our attempts to satisfy these needs, the environment plays a conditioning influence on the means and ways we employ. These ways and means adopted by a certain society to satisfy its basic needs and to follow a certain mode of life come under the term technology.

What interests us here is that aspect of technology which has to do with human progress. Is there a definite correlation between technology and human progress? Can we assume that a society with a more advanced technology is in a higher state of civilization than that with a less developed one? The answer is definitely no.

A civilization should be judged according to the effectiveness of justice, freedom, and morality it practices together with its contribution to the human race as a whole. Judged according to these standards, the development of technology in itself does not say anything yet. Its existence can help to bring about the realization of a good life. At the same time it can facilitate destruction and widespread misery as in war. It is thus clear that human progress depends not only on technology but still more on the manner it is utilized. This in turn depends on the circumstances which we are in and the influence exerted on us by our culture. To cite a glaring example let us take the two world wars we experienced in the short period of 25 years. Although there is much truth in the explanation of imperialism and war in terms of economic factors, we still do not discover the real causes of war. One thing is certain, a state of mind precedes this quarrel over economic interests. This state of mind divides the English, the French, the Germans, the Italians, the Spaniards, the Russians, the Americans, and the rest from one another. It prevents them from exploiting in common the resources

of Europe and set up an economic system which will benefit them all. Instead, this state of mind generates evil in economic as well as international relations by preventing common welfare to be the aim of every state. Because European cultural life is permeated by this disease of nationalism it became the source of wars and conflicts in which all possible technological devices were employed. In this sense technology has not been a benefit to human beings. Thus the interrelation and interinfluencing between culture, technology and environment in a given society comprise the factors that greatly contribute to human progress as a whole. For this reason the development of technology must be in proportion with the development of the moral power in the culture. This moral power acts as the controlling agency. Without this power our actions are inclined to revert to the primitive stage when the rule of the jungle that might is right was the order of the day.

Such a state of mind is what now comes under the term nationalism which extreme form was expressed by Nazism, a creed responsible for the most gruesome type of barbarism ever known in history. It is a disease that first infected Europe in the 16th century and which is now rapidly spreading in Asia and Africa.

This fear against nationalism is shared by many leading thinkers. Considering our situation at the moment such a fear is justified.

The term nationalism must not be confused with national interest. A person can strive for the welfare of his country without being an upholder of nationalism. The real meaning of the word nationalism can only be understood in the light of its historical origin. The history of nationalism revealed to us the nature of this undefinable psycho-emotional movement which cannot be approved of on any truly human standard. It has regulated moral principles of thought and action into a secondary and utilitarian position in political life. As such it has its dangers. Anyone who doubts this statement should go through

the writings of most of the sound modern Western thinkers who have now taken on themselves the task of condemning nationalism as one of the evils of our time.

Another aspect of technology of which we ought to be cautious is its relation to human development. If the technological growth of a society is encouraged without the necessary planning in the present age many a serious problem shall arise. I should again refer to the history of Europe in the last 200 years. There is hardly any social problem in the developed areas of the Western world which is somehow or rather not connected with the industrial and technological development of Western Europe. Social problems such as unemployment, overcrowding,

criminality, promiscuity, divorces, insanity, rise of unscrupulous political trends, acute class struggles etc. etc.

If a sound planning was introduced from the very beginning a lot if not all of the evils could be avoided or restrained. But the execution of a sound planning is conditioned by the existence and effectiveness of the group in power who sees the urgency and significance of such a planning. Thus for a proper development of technology we require two things, the existence of a particular group in power and the strengthening of the moral force in society. The one is political and the other is religious. In reality both are related to one another.

IBN MASKAWAIH

by

Mohd. Natsir

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Ibn Maskawaih

Abu Ali al-Khazin Ahmad bin Mohammed bin Yacub known as Ibn Maskawaih, originally from Persia, lived at the beginning of the 5th Islamic century. He was a convert to Islam.

The School of Aristotle. Ibn Maskawaih was one of those thinkers that left a mark in the history of civilizations. He possessed a wide and sound knowledge of ancient culture. Apart from being a philosopher he was also a poet of repute.

Like a great many philosophers of Islam Ibn Maskawaih felt attracted to Greek philosophy, in particular the school of Aristotle. Likewise those who were fond of mystical philosophy later followed the school of al-Ghazali and those who were fond of the philosophy of pragmatism followed the school of Ibn Khaldun.

Ibn Maskawaih and Schopenhauer. Ibn Maskawaih was a philosopher who chartered his own path. The main motive of his philosophy was to show us how to live ideally as a human being and how virtuous deeds and self-education could be made the method to attain that end. This is similar to the aim of Schopenhauer. (1788-1860). *Psychology and Introspection.* Ibn Maskawaih attached the greatest importance in his philosophy to psychology. Up till the time of Ibn Maskawaih it was the habit of those who studied philosophy to start with logic and other auxiliary sciences as a method to understand philosophy. Ibn Maskawaih started a new method contrary to the prevailing one. He suggested that one ought to begin with investigating one's own inner life, purging the soul of various habits and

passions which were not good. Thereafter we can hope to attain knowledge and wisdom, and based on this method of introspection we could continue our investigation of philosophy further.

Let us hear something from Ibn Maskawaih on the fear of death. "Verily, fear of death shall not be felt except by those who do not understand the real meaning of death and those who do not know their destiny. They think that the destruction of the body implies that of the self, dissolving, losing itself in dissolution. Or they suspect that death is an extraordinary kind of disease, differing greatly with the ordinary type so much so that it caused death and destruction. Those who believe that punishment is awaiting them after death become confused, not knowing what to expect, at the same time regretting the fact of parting with their property and the fruits of their labour. These are all irrelevant conjectures, having no evidential support."

For those of us now, interested in modern psychology, the opinion of Ibn Maskawaih sounds quite modern. Ibn Maskawaih's book *Tadhhibul Akhlak* shall certainly be of value and thought provoking for those of us interested in this field of knowledge. It would be out of place for instance to study the works of Freud with all due enthusiasm but at the same time neglect the works of our own thinkers in this branch. It seems ironical that our former thinkers are respected by precisely those who do not belong to their community. Let us hope that our investigation of the contributions of our former thinkers shall help to wipe out our feeling of inferiority.